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Mobile Marketing Applications of Travel Agencies

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Abstract

In recent years, the use of mobile devices in the marketing world is increasing parallel with technological advances. The main problem of this research is to determine agencies' use of what type of mobile tools for what type of purposes in the marketing process. The aim of this research is to identify Mobile Marketing (MM) applications used by group A travel agencies, and to describe the attitudes towards MM applications of agencies. According to related law, it is only group A agencies give all agency services. Therefore, it is thought that MM is more widely used by those agencies. Thus, this research was made only on the group A agencies. The population of study was consisted of 675 groups A agencies' representatives deployed in the European and Asian sides of Istanbul. A questionnaire was used as data collection tool. Questionnaire form consisted of two parts. In the first part, questions concerning MM and in the second part, questions regarding demographic issues to managers and travel agents took place. The results were given as descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation) on the tables. T-test and One Way ANOVA analysis were performed for the differences of mean among groups. In the study it was concluded that agencies use mobile phones mostly and mobile computers for increasing sales firstly and direct marketing. Thus, the main hypothesis established was confirmed partly.

Keywords: Travel Agency, Mobile Marketing, İstanbul.

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1. Introduction

In parallel with technological developments, the concept of mobility has begun to be used frequently in our daily lives as well, due to mobil devices such as smart phones, laptop computers, tablet PCs and PDAs. With the rapid development of wireless networks and the increase in users of mobile means of communication, and advertising in the wireless environment became a popular topic of discussion (Yunos et al. 2003) Understanding the benefits provided for business management by the usage of this kind of mobile devices in the marketing process of goods and services, increased the importance of such devices. Measuring the effect of the mobile advertisements is much easier when compared with other advertisement channels.

Mobile communication devices are providing great opportunities for companies, in the process of looking for ways to market their products and services. With mobile ads, promotional efforts can be performed more efficiently and with reduced costs directly on target customers. For example, mobile phone means a new communication channel for marketing staff to contact potential customers. Because mobile phones provide the opportunity to contact target customers 24 hours a day. Mobile devices are becoming unique option to be used in the marketing combination. Increased advertising costs and the efforts of winning and maintaing customers lead business managements to look for new methods. In this context, mobile devices present various opportunities

and a competitive enviroment as well as a suitable alternative for marketing strategies. Successful implementation of mobile devices in the marketing process of touristic products offers many advantages for vacationers and tourism enterprises. For examplei travel agencies are the enterprises responsible from the sales and marketing of tourism products in the tourism and travel industry. Agencies can use mobile devices for various purposes.

In this paper, the current situation MM applications in group A travel agencies and the attitudes of these agencies towards MM applications are examined. In this context, we investigated which mobile devices are used and for how long and for what purposes. We also examined their attitudes towards these applications. To that end, a survey form is developed and applied to the agencies located in the prominent districts of Istanbul and which constituting our sample. The acquired data shows that agencies implement MM and use mobile devices mainly with the purpose of increasing sales, bringing in customers, and adopting direct marketing for several years. We think that the results acquired would be proved useful for many agency managers and vacationers. Considered that MM is not commonly adopted in the tourism and travel industry, it is our expectation that such studies will provide some contribution to the literature and MM will arouse some discussions in the field. With such studies, the advantages of MM for agencies may be emphasized or reminded.

2. Mobile Trade

Mobile trade provides brand new opportunities for services such as mobile phones and banking, payment and ticket purchasing. Mobile trade involves transactions performed through wireless devices and a data connection and which results in the transfer of value in exchaning information, service or goods (Nokia Dictionary, 2014). Mobile trade is characterized as a new revolution in the e-trade field and, from a general perspective, defined as transactions structured over wireless communication networks and which involve monetary value (Kumar and Zahn, 2003). Mobility, which means portability and movability, liberates individuals. From an information technology perspective, mobility is to be wireless and have movability and portability. The world becomes a global market thanks to the internet; and wireless cmmunication channels remove the limitations of the internet and accelerate this process. Reduced prices, ease of use and the convenience it provides rapidly increase the numbers of mobile users. Ericson estimates that there will be 50 billion mobile devices connect to the internet around the world by the year of 2020 (OECD Internet Economy Outlook 2012:16). The number of the internet, social network and mobile device users in the World ad Turkey, according to 2014 January, are given below. This can be seen more clearly in Table 1.

Table 1: Global Data Snopshot, January 2014

Total World Population	7,095,476,817	52%-Urban %48-Rural
İnternet Users	2,484,917,152	35% İnternet Penetration
Active Social Network Users	1,856,680,860	26% Active Social Network Penetration
Mobile Subscribers	6,572,950,124	93% Mobil Penetration

Source: Global Digital Statistics 2014.

Table 2 shows that there is a considerable increase in the numbers of mobile users in Turkey.

Table 2: Turkey Data Snopshot, January 2014

Population	80,694,485	72%-Urban 28%-Rural
İnternet Users	35,990,932	45% İnternet Penetration
Active Facebook Users	36,000,000	45% Facebook Penetration
Active Mobile Subscribtions	68,000,000	84% Mobil Penetration

Source: Global Digital Statistics 2014.

In addition to the tables given above some statistics for Turkey announced in 2014 in Global Digital Statistics as follows:

i. Average time that internet users spend using the internet each day through a desktop or laptop is 4 hours and 51 minutes. Mobile internet penetration as a percentage of total population is 36%. Average time that mobile internet users spend using mobile internet each day is 1 hour and 53 minutes.

ii. Smartphone penetration as a percentage of the total population is %30. Smartphone users searching for local information via their phone is 95%. Smartphone users researching products via their phone is 92%. Smartphone users who have made a purchase via their phone is 43%.

The figures above, indicates that the number of mobile device users both in Turkey and in the World will increase and the enterprises will implement more MM.

The Institution of Information Technologies and Communication announced its "2013 4th Quarter Market Data Report". According to this report, the situation is Turkey is as follows (BTK, 2014):

Net sales revenue of Turk Telekom and mobile network enterprises reached to 26 billion TL with an increase of 9% with comparison to the previous year; and the investments reached to 3.8 billion TL in total with an increase of 1%. Broadband internet subscribers in Turkey in the last quarter of 2013 reached to 32.6 million. The annual increase rate of total internet users is 18%. In Turkey, the broadband penetration ratio by population is 11% and mobile broadband penetration is 31.5%. The Mobile Penetration rate in Turkey is 90.9%. While the number of mobile broadband postpaid subscribers reached to 11.3 million in the last quarter of 2013, prepaid subscribers were 12.8 million. In the same term, prepaid subscribers constituted the 59.5% of mobile subscribers, the percentage of postpaid subscribers gone up to 40.5% from 38.4%. While the 90.9% of total mobile subscribers were individual users, the remaining 9.1% consisted of corporate identities.

Mcommerce sales include all purchases made via smartphones, tablets and other mobile devices, excluding sales of travel and event tickets Emarketer estimates that US consumers will spend $24 billion shopping on their tablets, and that figure will nearly double by 2015. Mcommerce sales on smartphones are lower and will grow more slowly, reaching $13.44 billion in 2013 and $24.32 billion by 2016. Purchases on other mobile devices, such as ereaders, will continue to make up a small but steady share of the mcommerce pie. The rapid rise in mcommerce sales on tablets means that such purchases will account for 9.4% of all retail ecommerce sales this year, and 16.9% of the total by 2016. Smartphones, which initially had a lead due to earlier adoption, will contribute 5.3% of retail ecommerce sales this year, a figure that will nudge up only slightly through eMarketer's forecast period (Emarketer 2013).

The possibility of making payments via mobile phones or similar devices created the mobile trade. Mobile trade practices can be described as "Mobile Instant Messaging (MIM), Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS), Mobile Financial Services (m-banking, m-exchange, m-money, m-bill etc.), Mobile Security Services, Mobile Shopping (m-reservation, m-bidding, m-post card etc.), Mobile Advertisement, Mobile Dynamic Information Management (m-membership, m-passport, m-games, m-music etx.)" (Sarısakal and Aydın, 2003: 85).

Mobile communication is the means of communication where users are independant from place and have the freedom of movement. Mobile means of communication are Mobile Phone Systems (1G, 2G, 3G), Smartphone, PDA (Personal Digital Assistant, Notebook, Tablet PC, GPS (Global Positioning System) (Alkaya, 2007: 3-9)

Infrastructures and technologies used in mobile communication can be described as GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications), SMS (Short Message Service), MMS **(**Multimedia Messaging Service), WAP (Wireless Application Protocol), GPRS (General Packet Radio Service), EDGE (Enhanced Data Rates for Global Evolution), UMTS (Universal Mobile Telecommunications Systems), Bluetooth, WI-FI (Wireless Fidelity), RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) (Alkaya, 2007: 10-24). In recent years with the combination of platforms such as WAP (Wireless Application Protocol), SMS (Short Message Services), HTML (Hyper Text Markup

Language) the internet and mobile phone technologies have become more integrated. The rates regarding internet use is as follows.

Table 3: Time Spent on The Internet, January 2014
(Average Number Of Hours Per Day Spent By Internet Users On The Internet)

Countries	Access Through Laptop/ Desktop	Access Through Mobile Device	**Countries**	Access Through Laptop/ Desktop	Access Through Mobile Device
Brazil	6,1	2,4	Russia	4,9	1,4
South Africa	5,6	2,5	India	4,9	2,6
Indonesia	5,5	2,5	Canada	4,9	1,9
Mexico	5,4	3,2	Turkey	4,9	1,9
Singapore	5,3	2,0	Italy	4,7	2,0
USA	5,2	2,4	China	4,5	1,9
UAE	5,2	3,0	Australia	4,5	1,7
Argentina	5,2	3,4	UK	4,2	1,5
Thailand	5,1	3,1	France	4,1	1,0
Poland	5,0	1,4	Germany	3,8	1,5
Saudi Arabia	5,0	3,0	Japan	3,5	1,0
			South Korea	3,5	1,6

Source: Global Digital Statistics 2014,

Table 4: Mobile Penetration By Country, January 2014

Countries	%	**Countries**	%
United Arab Emirates	252%	Indonesia	112%
Saudi Arabia	197%	Australia	110%
Russia	184%	South Korea	110%
Italy	158%	France	109%
Singapore	148%	Japan	109%
South Africa	141%	USA	103%
Argentina	138%	China	89%
Brazil	134%	Mexico	87%
Germany	133%	Turkey	84%
Poland	132%	Canada	76%
UK	130%	India	73%
Thailand	125%		

Source: Global Digital Statistics 2014.

3. Mobile Marketing (MM)

Thanks to the rapidly growing internet technology as a means of direct marketing target customers can be reached independant of time and location. And the most used means is MM. MM is an interactive means of marketing used in the promotion of goods or services or ideas via smart phones in a way that it will benefit the business management and other stakeholders (Scharl et al. 2005: 162). MM means "the delivery of personal information ensuring the promotion of goods, services and ideas to the customers via mobile means of communication in the right place and time". According to Barnes (2002: 401), with advanced wireless data services many procedures and practices in the modern world are being moved to the users' mobile devices. As a result of this combination, a new mobil advertisement environment has emerged.

Mobil advertisements are the integral part of the mobile trade and falls under two types as SMS and MMS advertisements. The first is short messages (SMS) limited with 160 characters in plain text that are sent to the mobile phones of target customers determined with their permission. For example, SMS provides an effective and reliable, two-way communication among the brand, consumer, employee and users. However permission based marketing exercises is valid for MM as well (Kavassalis et al, 2003), respecting the privacy of people and not harassing them is the main principle. (Coursaris et al. 2003; Ho and Kwok, 2003; Pitkanen et al. 2003; Roussos et al. 2003; Yunos et al, 2003; Tsang et al. 2004;). The second one is Multimedia messages (MMS). MMS advertisement can be more effective since it contains voice and visuals (Li and Stoller 2007: 5).

Bluetooth is another mobile advertisement instrument. In this method, informing, reminding or persuasive advertisement texts are sent to the customers' phone through locations with special transmitters. As can be seen, mobile advertisements offers advertisers the opportunity to astablish a two-way communication with the consumers aith visual and voiced texts. Thanks to mobile advertisements, one on one engagement with customers attracts more attentionand the customers can respond later by saving the incoming messages. The most important characteristics differentiating mobile ads from traditional and internet advertisements are that they contain individualized advertisement messages. And this enhances the efficiency of the advertisements. When compared to most of the traditional media advertisements, mobile ads can be superior with regard to compatibility with customer needs and development of consumer relationships (Xu et al. 2008: 711).

4. Mobile Marketing Applications in Tourism Industry

Today, mobile means of communication has a wide area of application in many countries around the world. This situation presents itself in tourism and travel ındustry as well. In recent years, it has been known that vacationers prefer mobile devices when planning their travels. They tend to make their own travel arrangements and bookings via internet or mobile devices. 52% of people travelling for business book their reservations with mobile devices: while 23% share videos about their trips (Bayram 2010). "The total transaction value of mobile hospitality reservations more than doubled from over $3 billion in 2012 to over $8 billion in 2013. Looking back at the 2011 figure where Booking.com saw $1 billion in mobile bookings, it is clear that mobile accommodation booking continues to grow rapidly year on year (Booking.com, 2014).

According to Bayram (2010), after Hilton Hotels announced its first mobile app in 2009, it launched another application for the brand Waldorf-Astori. According to the author Hilton mobile application was downloaded 340.000 times as of the end of August 2010. It is indicated that room reservation revenue of Hilton hotels increased by 200% as of May 2010. On the other hand, the research called 2010 Traveler Technology published by Phocus Wright found that; 39% use their mobile phones to search for hotel rooms or flight bookings, 42% use theri devices for hotel and flight check-in procedures.

According to study by Expedia Media Solutions and comScore (2012), some results regarding use of Smartphone and tablets; making purchases on mobile devices are as follows:

i. 44 % used a tablet or Smartphone to plan their trip – while 48 % used a mobile device to dream of their next trip.

ii. 86 % of mobile planners already knew their destination when conducting research on a mobile device.

iii. 47% relied on friend and family recommendations and 40 % relied on Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) for destination ideas.

iv. Deals and promotions (64 %), photos (55 %) and recommendations (38 %) are the most useful types of content for those seeking trip ideas.

v. Of travelers who own a mobile device, 61 % have made a purchase on a tablet in the last six months while 51 % have made a purchase on a Smartphone, showing that travelers are more likely to purchase travel on tablets versus Smartphone.

vi. Of those who have booked travel on a mobile device, 80 % of Smartphone users and 90 % of tablet users would do so again.

vii. Of the 44 % who plan travel on a mobile device, 44 percent used an app.

viii. Nearly 60 % of mobile airline and 56 % of hotel bookers used an app to book their reservation.

ix. Accessibility (43 %), ease of use (35 %) and app availability (33 %) drive travel bookings for Smartphone users.

According to another study, the U.K. mobile market is rich with potential for those trying to reach and influence consumers, particularly travelers. The study outlines (Expedia Media Solutions and comScore, 2014)

i. In the U.K., online travel content reaches 69 % of mobile devices, which is 11 % higher than in the U.S.

ii. When it comes to purchases, U.K. travelers are avid mobile shoppers, making them a prime demographic for marketers looking to tap into the vast potential of the U.K. mobile market.

iii. One in four U.K. travelers reported booking at least one component of their most recent trip on mobile.

iv. The incremental opportunity to reach mobile bookers is high, with 23 % of all smartphone owners and 45 % of all tablet owners likely to book travel using a mobile device within the next year.

v. Those booking on mobile have the potential to become repeat customers, with 70 % of smartphone bookers and 90 % of tablet bookers willing to do so again in the next year

Some factors may be considered important for the success of MM applications in hotel enterprises For example, configuration of hotel enterprise websites to ensure compatibility for mobile phone access, proper mobile advertising of discounts and promotions encouraging consumers, pages designed for mobile application to be clear and concise, simplification of procedures such as booking, cancellation, making changes etc. Additionally, the mobile applications must be compatible with services such as foursquare, gowalla, facebook and palces.

Karamehmet (2013: 590-591) states that in hotel industry, the private information of customers (number of mobile phone, birth date, date of marriage) can be received from a good database when hotel accommodations are provided. On their special days, instead of sending messages, the hotel operators call customers directly and celebrate these days. The hotel operator celebrates special days of other guests apart from customer portfolio by sending SMS. In this way, marketing is combined with communication. Thus, customers receiving service from Hotels remember not only hotel and service but also an unconscious action is developed.

In Turkey, sales and marketing functions in the tourism and travel industry was widely taken up by travel agencies as per law no. 1618. Yuan and Cheng (2004: 467) noted the importance of mobile phones regarding marketing efforts. These points mentioned by the authors can be described with regard to the touristic product marketing process of travel agencies:

i. Since the customers carry their mobile phones open and with them all the time, they are always accesible for travel agencies.

ii. Establishing and developing special realitonships with customer may attract more attention.

iii. It is possible for customers to save the messages coming from travel agencies and respond later. That is, MM activities are easier to measure.

iv. MM offers agencies the opportunity of establishing voiced and visible communication with customers.

v. Follow-up rates are higher because mobile devices provide enjoyable alternatives regarding various holiday options and promotions that attract young people.

vi. Market segmentation and selection of target market according to the touristic product types can be easily achieved.

5. Methodology

Model and Hypothesis: In this research we adopted "General Review Model". General review models are review studies performed on the whole research universe or a sample to acquire information about the universe. As a descriptive study, in this research, the attitudes of the representatives of Group-A agencies implementing MM and operating within Istanbul towards MM implementations are defined within their own circumstances. The opinions of agency representatives regarding MM applications are collected and interpreted without making any changes. According to Karasar (2004), with descriptive analysis it is aimed that a past or current situation to be described as it is. The subject of the research is described with its current state by analysing it within its own conditions and without any efforts of changing or affecting.

It is tested whether there is a difference in the attitudes of Group A travel agencies operating in important districts of Istanbul according to the demographic characteristics of the repliers. In this context, the hypothesis established is as follows. "The attitudes of agency representatives towards MM applications differ among groups formed according to the demographic variables". Developed hypotheses are formed as shown below:

H_1: Attitudes of agency representatives towards MM differs according to the "Gender" variable.

H_2: Attitudes of agency representatives towards MM differs according to the "Age" variable.

H_3: Attitudes of agency representatives towards MM differs according to the "Marital Status" variable.

H_4: Attitudes of agency representatives towards MM differs according to the "Education" variable.

H_5: Attitudes of agency representatives towards MM differs according to the "Experience" variable.

H_6: Attitudes of agency representatives towards MM differs according to the "MM Application Period" variable.

H_7: Attitudes of agency representatives towards MM differs according to the "Task type" variable.

H_8: Attitudes of agency representatives towards MM differs according to the "Employment of special personnel for MM applications" variable.

H_9: Attitudes of agency representatives towards MM differs according to the "MM Application Frequency" variable.

Research Limitations To collect date in this research, agencies were visited one-by-one and asked whether they adopt the usre of MM. The number of how many agencies officially located on which districts was not determined. The implementation of the survey and the collection of date took a lot of time.

Universe and Sample: In Istanbul, there are 2490 Group-A agencies located in European and Asian sides (TURSAB, 2014) However, the information of which agencies among these implement MM was not acquired. Group-A agencies replying "yes" to the query of "Do you implement MM?" between November and December 2013 were determined via convenience sampling and 122 agencies included to the sample.

Data Collection Instrument: In the research, the date collected through survey forms. The survey form is prepared to determine the attitudes of travel agency managers, in the group A travel agencies located in various districts in Istanbul, regarding MM applications; and it consists three sections. In the first section of the survey there are 5 items regarding demographic features and 8 multiple-choice items regarding agencies in the second section. In this section, classification, sequencing and ratio scales are used and we utilized from discrete and

continuous variables. In the last section of the survey, there is likert-type scale involving 22 statements which aims to determine the attitudes of participants regarding MM applications. Likert-type queries are graded from 1 to 5. Each item in the survey scaled as, "1=strongly disagree", "2=agree", "3=undecided", "4=agree" "5=strongly agree".

During the preparation of the survey form the related literature, 2 expert academician and 10 agency representatives were referred. Especially in the process of forming Likert-type items, the clauses and expressions used and recommended by academician and agency representatives had been quite useful.

Data Collection: Survey forms applied to the representatives of agencies operating in European and Asian sides of Istanbul and it was carried out face-to-face between the dates of November and December 2013. The areas indicating the location of agencies included in the survey are shown in Table 5.

Agencies selected according to the Convenience Sampling Method filled 129 survey forms. After the assessment, 122 of them considered to be valid. It could not be officiallydetermined whether how many agencies operating in which districts to be able to form stratified sample. However, the sample group focussed on regions of Istanbul where agencies are prominent.

Table 5: The areas in Istanbul where the survey applied

Name of areas	**Number of travel agency**
Şişli	17
Taksim	25
Harbiye	14
Beyoğlu	16
Sultanahmet	5
Kadıköy	9
Üsküdar	8
Ümraniye	6
Bakırköy	8
Beşiktaş	6
Bahçelievler	1
Ataköy	1
Yeni Bosna	2
Avcılar	1
Güneşli	1
Fatih	1
Eminönü	1
Toplam	122

Data Analysis: The data was interpreted via SPSS 18 (Statistic Program for Social Science) and ANOVA, T-test, Frequency and Percantage analyses also applied. We used T -test for the comparison of averages between two groups and ANOVA for more than two groups. In addition to these tests, a regular distribution suitability test was also applied.

Validity and Reliability Analysis: For the coherence among queries in the survey form and the reliability analysis indicating the suitability of the scale used with the purpose of the research Cronbach's Alpha statistical (α) coefficient must be estimated. According to the alpha coefficient the reliability of the scale is interpreted as foloes (Kalaycı et al., 2005: 405):

If $0{,}00 \leq \alpha \leq 0{,}40$ the scale is not reliable,

If $0{,}40 \leq \alpha \leq 0{,}60$ the scale has low reliability,

If $0,60 \leq \alpha \leq 0,80$ the scale is quite reliable,

If $0,80 \leq \alpha \leq 1,00$ the scale is highly reliable,

Table 6: MM applications-Reliability Statistics Regarding Attitude Scaling

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on, Standardized Items	Number of Items
,919	,922	22

According to Table 6, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the scale regarding MM applications-Attitude scale is estimated as α=0,919. "This value shows that the reliability level of the scale is high (α>0,70)". Therefore $0,70<\alpha<1$ is achieved. This shows that the scale is quite reliable (Özdamar, 1999: 522; Kalaycı, 2009: 405; Büyüköztürk, 2010: 171).

Before finalizing the survey form, pilot tests are applied to 10 agencies between 1-15 October 2013. As a result of the pilot tests, some items in the survey form are simplified and some others are omitted. Thus, it was provided that the queries in the survey can be understood by all participants in the same way. In this way, the "structural validity" of the scale was established.

Table 7: Attitude Scale of Participants Towards MM Applications-KMO and Bartlett's Test Results

KMO	Bartlett's Test	
0,872	χ^2	p
	1587.825	0.000***

***p<0.001

Additionally, the factor analysis was performed by using Bartlett's Test regarding the structural validity of developed scales. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test provide the required information for sample requirements. According to this KMO coefficient of the scale indicates that the data matrix is suitable for factor extracting. The chi-square statistics estimated according to the Bartlett's test result is significant. Therefore, the data matrix is suitable for factor analysis.

The analysed scale regarding MM application was seen that it fell under 5 factors after the conversion. The variant that these 5 facors explain is 65.551% The first factor explains 16,56% of total variance, the second factor 14.83%, the third facot 13.40%, the fourth 12.06% and the fifth factor explains 8.68% of the total variance.

The first factor contains 7 queries, the second factor 5, the third factor 3, the fourth factor 4, and the fifth factor contains 2 queries. The factor load of queries 7,5,6,22,21,1,7 constituting the first factor is in the range of 0,493 and 0,768; factor load of queries 11,12,10,14,16 constituting the second factor is in the range of 0,513 and 0,775; factor load of queries 2,4,3 constituting the third factor is in the range of 0,719 and 0,842; The factor load of queries 20,18,19,9 constituting the first factor is in the range of 0,488 and 0,755; and the factor load of queries 13 and 8 constituting the fifth factor is in the range of 0,731 and 750.

6. Findings and Analysis

Some demographic characteristics of the participants and current situation in agencies regarding MM applications are shown in Table 8. According to Table 8, 65,6% of the participants are female, 43,4% are below the age of 30, 57,4% are single, half of them are college graduates, %45,9 have an experience of 5-10 years and % 44,6 are marketing representatives. 79.5% of agencies have less than 3 branches, 73.8% employs special personnel for MM and 69.5% applies MP once a week.

The data regarding which mobile devices are used by agencies are shown in Table 9.

According to Table 9, travel agencies use more than one mobile device during the Mobile Marketing process. 86.9% of agencies use Mobile Phone, 56.6% Mobile Computer, 43.4% PDA and 41.0% use Tablet PCs. Prioritized purposes of travel agencies in using mobile devices are shown in Table 10. According to the %38,5, first priority purpose in MM applications is "increasing sales". According to the %16,4, first priority purpose in MM applications is "direct sales". According to the %38,5, second priority purpose in MM applications is "increasing sales" as well.

Table 8: Demographic Characteristics of Participants and MM Applications (n=122)

Variable	Groups	F	%	Variable	Groups	F	%
Gender	Male	42	34.4	**MP Application Period**	Less than 1 year	6	4.9
	Female	80	65.6		1-3 years	50	41.0
	Total	**122**	**100**		4-6 years	47	38.5
Age	30 and below	53	43.4		7-9 years	18	14.8
	31-40	48	39.4		10 years and more	1	0.8
	41-50	16	13.1		**Total**	**122**	**100**
	51 and more	5	4.1	**Position**	Manager	38	31.4
	Total	**122**	**100**		Agency Owner	27	22.3
Marital Status	Married	52	42.6		Marketing Representative	54	44.6
	Single	70	57.4		Other	2	1.6
	Total	**122**	**100**		**Total**	**122**	**100**
Education	Elementary	5	4.1	**Number of Branches**	Less than 3	97	79.5
	High School	54	44.3		3-8	19	15.6
	University	58	47.5		9-14	1	0.8
	Master	4	3.3		15 and more	5	4.1
	Post-graduate	1	0.8		**Total**	**122**	**100**
	Total	**122**	**100**	**Special Personnel**	Yes	90	73.8
Experience	Less than 5 year	35	28.7		No	32	26.2
	5-10 years	56	45.9		**Total**	**122**	**100**
	11-15 years	23	18.9	**MM Application Frequency**	Once in 2-3 days	6	4.9
	16 years and more	8	6.5		Once in a week	11	9.1
	Total	**122**	**100**		Once in two weeks	10	8.3
					Once in three weeks	85	69.5
					Once in a month	8	6.6
					Once in two months	2	1.6
					Total	**121**	**100**

Table 9: Mobile Device Usage Rates

	Mobil Device	**F**	**%**
Mobil Device Usage	Mobile Phone	106	86.9
	Mobile computer	69	56.6
	PDA (Personal Digital Assistant)	53	43.4
	Tablet Computer	50	41.0

Table 10: Prioritized Purpose of Mobile Device Usage

Prioritized Purposes in MM Usage	Priority 1	Priority 2
Increasing sales	%**38,5**	%**34,4**
Attracting attention	%3,3	%4,1
Winning a new customer	%13,9	%**15,6**
Advertisement	%5,7	%10,7
Ensuring customer loyalty	%13,1	%5,7
Direct marketing	%**16,4**	%13,9
Product introduction	%6,6	%13,1
Other	%1,6	%1,6
Total missing	%0,9	%0,6
Total	**%100**	**%100**

Attitudes of travel agencies towards MM applications are given in Table 11. According to Table 11, it is seen that travel agencies generally provide positive replies to positive queries. For example, travel agencies stated that; they can access to potential customers through MM ($\overline{X}$=4,45) and have the possibility of implementing direct marketing ($\overline{X}$=4,51). One of the target customers of travel agencies is the young population using the mobile devices frequently. The young population is widely informed about marketing communication implemented through mobile channels. Alkaya (2007) indicates that 85% of the university students are aware of mobile means of communication. Barutçu and Göl (2009), according to the results of another research implemented on 158 mobile phone users, 79,7% of mobile phone users read the mobile advertisements. On the other hand in the study agencies indicate that with mobile phones they arrange the most suitable hotels ($\overline{X}$=4,51), have the opportunity of faster ticket sales ($\overline{X}$=4,72), have the ability to measure their marketing efforts ($\overline{X}$=4,51)and increase their customer numbers ($\overline{X}$=4,28) and sales volume ($\overline{X}$=4,27).

In the survey, travel agencies, in fact, expressed positive opinion by providing negative replies to negative queries. For instance, travel agencies disagreed with low averages to these negative statements:

"MM is not a suitable marketing instrument" ($\overline{X}$=1,86); "MM does not provide faster access to our potential customers" ($\overline{X}$=1,44); MP does not provide direct access to our customers ($\overline{X}$=1,55); MM does not accelerate our customers procedures regarding the agency ($\overline{X}$=1,50); Advertisements via MM instruments does not increase the recognition of our agency ($\overline{X}$=1,67); MM is not effective in increasing the publicity of our agency ($\overline{X}$=1,76).

Şanlıöz et al (2013) indicates that the agencies they examined fulfil, in coherence with their corporate vision, the organizational structure, budget plan, infrastructure and software investments required for MM and they started to benefit the positive return of these investments. Prioritized purposes of travel agencies in using mobile devices are shown in Table 10. However the Correlation test shows that R^2 cannot explain the "Increasing the Sales" purpose, which means that "increasing the sales" is not in the position of primary purpose in MM applications of agencies. The same situation is valid for secondary purpose as well. It is clear that R^2 does not explain the "direct marketing" purpose in the correlation test. Which means that "direct marketing" is not in the position of secondary purpose in MM applications of agencies (See. Table 12).

Table 11: Attitudes of Travel Agencies Towards MM Applications

No	Statements		Level of Agreement					$\bar{X}$ Ave.	s.s.
			I definitely don't agree	I don't agree	I am undecided	I agree	I definitely agree		
1	MP is more effective than traditional marketing	f	2	2	15	54	49	**4.19**	0.83
		%	1.6	1.6	12.3	44.3	40.2		
2	MM is not a suitable marketing instrument for agencies	f	46	52	20	2	2	**1.86**	0.86
		%	37.7	42.6	16.4	1.6	1.6		
3	Mobile appliations are not effective in preferal of our agency	f	50	58	8	5	1	**1.76**	0.81
		%	41.0	47.5	6.6	4.1	0.8		
4	MM applications have no effect in attracting more attention by our agency	f	44	63	10	2	3	**1.82**	0.84
		%	36.1	51.6	8.2	1.6	2.5		
5	MM provides faster access to our potential customers	f	3	2	5	39	73	**4.45**	0.85
		%	2.5	1.6	4.1	32.0	59.8		
6	MM does not provide faster access to our potential customers	f	77	40	2	2	1	**1.44**	0.69
		%	63.1	32.8	1.6	1.6	0.8		
7	MP does not provide direct acces to our customers.	f	75	34	7	4	2	**1.55**	0.87
		%	61.5	27.9	5.7	3.3	1.6		
8	We use direct marketing towards our customers via mobile applications	f		1	7	42	72	**4.51**	0.64
		%		0.8	5.7	34.4	59.0		
9	Mobile applications reduce our marketing costs.	f	3	14	17	52	36	3.85	1.04
		%	2.5	11.5	13.9	42.6	29.5		
10	MM enhance our relationships with our customers.	f	2	2	34	66	18	3.78	0.77
		%	1.6	1.6	27.9	54.1	14.8		
11	MM increases our number of customers.	f	2		8	63	49	**4.28**	0.73
		%	1.6		6.6	51.6	40.2		
12	MM increases our sales volume.	f	2	1	9	59	51	**4.27**	0.77
		%	1.6	0.8	7.4	48.4	41.8		
13	MM does not accelerate our customers' agency related procedures	f	75	38	6	1	2	**1.50**	0.77
		%	61.5	31.1	4.9	0.8	1.6		
14	With MM we make our customers feel special.	f		4	38	61	19	3.77	0.74
		%		3.3	31.1	50.0	15.6		
15	Advertisements via MM instruments does not increase the recognition of our agency	f	62	44	12	2	2	**1.67**	0.84
		%	50.8	36.1	9.8	1.6	1.6		
16	Our advertisements done through mobile channels are found more believable by customers	f	2	11	60	41	8	3.34	0.80
		%	1.6	9.0	49.2	33.6	6.6		
17	Since the focus group is known in MM we can measure the effectiveness of marketing efforts.	f	1	1	6	67	47	**4.29**	0.67
		%	0.8	0.8	4.9	54.9	38.5		
18	MM applications are not persuasive regarding making preferences	f	36	39	38	8	1	2.17	0.95
		%	29.5	32.0	31.1	6.6	0.8		
19	MM is not effective in the advertisement of our agency	f	48	59	11	4		**1.76**	0.75
		%	39.3	48.4	9.0	3.3			
20	MM makes the customer feel "leave me alone".	f	26	36	54	5	1	2.33	0.88
		%	21.3	29.5	44.3	4.1	0.8		
21	Through mobile phones we ensure that our customers to find most suitable hotel for them	f	1	2	6	39	74	**4.50**	0.74
		%	0.8	1.6	4.9	32.0	60.7		
22	Through mobile phones, we provide faster ticket buying opportunities.	f	1	1	1	25	94	**4.72**	0.60
		%	0.8	0.8	0.8	20.5	77.0		

Table 12: Correlation Test

Correlations

		Increase in the sales volume	MP Application Period
Pearson Correlation	Increase in the sales volume	1.000	,137
	MP Application Period	,137	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Increase in the sales volume	.	,067
	MP Application Period	,067	.
N	Increase in the sales volume	122	122
	MP Application Period	122	122

Model Summary

Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	1	,137[a]	,019	,010	,77012

a. Predictors: (Constant), MP Application Period

Correlations

		Direct Marketing	MP Application Period
Pearson Correlation	Direct Marketing	1.000	,007
	MP Application Period	,007	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Direct Marketing	.	,470
	MP Application Period	,470	.
N	Direct Marketing	122	122
	MP Application Period	122	122

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,007[a]	,000	-,008	,64849

a. Predictors: (Constant), MP Application Period

The main reasons for this can be problems such as; wrong choice of focus group, sending wrong message, lack of message sending frequency Therefore agencies need to review their 1th and 2nd purposes.

According to table 13, wheter the average of agency managers' attitude towards MM activities differs between groups is tested with t-test and variant analysis. According to this, there is no difference on the 0,05 significancy level according to gender (t=-1,56; p>0,05), age (t=-1,414; p>0,05), marital status (t=-0,85; p>0,05), education (t=-0,35; p>0,05) variables. In this case, hypotheses based on gender, age, marital status and education variables are rejected. According to these findings, agencies of different age, gender, marital status and education groups have similar opinion. Similarly according to the variant analysis results, there is no difference on the 0,05 significancy level with regard to experience (F= 2,283; p>0,05), MM application period (F= 1,585; p>0,05) and

position (F= 1,091; p>0,05) In this case, hypotheses based on "Experience", "MM Application Period" and "Type of Position" variables are rejected. According to these findings, agencies of different age, gender, marital status and education groups have similar opinions.

Table 13: Comparison of group averages regarding attitudes

according to the demographic characteristics of the participants.

Variable	Groups	N	$\bar{X}$ (Ave.)	s.d	Sig.
Gender	Male	42	4.09	0.62	t= -1,56
	Female	80	4.23	0.40	P= 0,12
Age	30 and below	53	4.11	0.48	t = -1,414
	31 and above	69	4.24	0.49	P= 0,16
Marital Status	Married	52	4.14	0.58	t = -0,85
	Single	70	4.22	0.41	P=0,39
Education	High School	59	4.17	0.44	t = -0,35
	University	63	4.20	0.53	P= 0,72
Experience	5 years and less	35	4.04	0.51	F= 2,283
	5-10 years	56	4.25	0.41	P= 0,106
	11 years and more	31	4.22	0.56	
MP Application Period	3 years and less	56	4.13	0.49	F = 1,585
	4-6 years	47	4.28	0.50	P= 0,209
	7 years and more	18	4.09	0.44	
Position	Manager	38	4.22	0.54	F = 1,091
	Agency Owner	27	4.30	0.33	P= 0,339
	Marketing representative	54	4.13	0.50	
Number of branches	Less than 3	97	4.18	0.50	t = 0,04
	More than 3	25	4.18	0.43	P= 0,96
Special personnel	Yes	90	4.27	0.45	t =3,45
	No	32	3.94	0.52	P=**0,000****
MM application Frequency	1-2 in a week	17	3.91	0.45	t = -2,54
	1-2 in a month	104	4.23	0.48	P= **0,01***

* : P<0,05 ** : P<0,001

However, these points are noteworthy: Agencies employing special personnel for MM applications (t= 3,45; p<0,001); and agencies using MM 1-2 times in a month (t=-2,54; p<0,05) have more positive opinions and attitudes towards MM applications when compared to other groups. Therefore last two hypothesis of the research have been accepted.

7. Conclusion and Suggestions

In this research, the current situation and attitudes of Group-A travel agencies regarding MM are investigated. In paralel with the findings acquired, the results we have reached are:

All activities regarding MM in agencies, in addition to the planning of digital marketing, require the fulfillment of necessary softwares and hardwares as wellas team infrastructure. Internet and mobile phones offer travel agencies the opportunity to directly market the holiday packages to the vacationers, which can affect the purchase-based decision making process. Through mobile applications, travel agencies can also start the customer relations process. Travela agencies can reach out to the potential customers in a more direct, fast and eeasier way, accelerate the procedures and increase their publicity and recognition by MM instruments and mobile ads. MM offers agencies the opportunity of implementing direct marketing and providing the most suitable hotels and faster ticket sales. On the other hand, with MM agencies can measure their marketing activities and increase their number of customers as well as sales colume.

Most of the participants are single females who are below the age of 30. Half of the participants were college graduates with 5-10 years of experience and most of them are marketing experts. Most of the agencies have less than 3 branches and employ special personnel for MM and implement MM once in three weeks. When the attitudes of agency representatives regarding MM applications, no statisticaly significant differences were found among groups classified according to demographic features (age, gender, marital status, education, experience). The attitudes present no significant difference with regard to MM application period, type of position variables as well. Agencies employing special personnel for MM applications and agencies using MM 1-2 times in a month have more positive opinions and attitudes towards MM applications when compared to other groups.

The most used mobile devices by agencies are mobile phones and mobile computers. Prioritized purposes are increasing the sales and direct marketing. Even though agencies indicate that theit prioritized goal is to "increase sales and adopt direct marketing", correlation test shows that R^2 does not explain these goals. That is, "increasing sales and implementing direct marketing" are not seen as primary and secondary purposes.

In the light of this research, it would be proper to provide these recommendations to the agencies.

i. Agencies must review their purposes in using mobile devices.

ii. Agencies must periodically measure their MM applications. They need to monitor how many people are reached out with mobile and digital promotions, at what rate the sales were affected by these applications and on how many people these applications were successful.

iii. Agencies must use the online environment in the best way they can and maximise its benefits. Thus, they can earn the further trust of their customers.

iv. Customer is one of the best information resouces for the enterprise. Agencies need to improve themselves by receving feedbacks from their customers.

In this paper, the current situation of MM applications in group A travel agencies and the attitudes of these agencies towards MM applications are examined. Further studies may be extended and focus on other agency groups (B and C). This research may be conducted through the chanell of Turkey Travel Agency Union (TURSAB) and reach out to a lot more agencies. On the other hand, the study may deal with mobile devices are or can be used with regard to marketing in hotel management ındustry. For instance, the attitudes of tourists towards the mobile ads coming from hotel enterprises or agencies and their effects on decision making process.

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